

MERCHANTVILLE SHADE TREE COMMISSION

MINUTES, NEWS, and AGENDA

Minutes from the last meeting held at the Station Coffee House on February 1, 2016, news since then, and agenda for the next meeting to be held on Monday March 21, 2016, at 7 pm in Boro Hall, first floor.

Those present February 1 at the Station Coffee House

Kerry Mentzer, Hollis Ryan, John Long, Kris Donohue, Katherine Swann, and Bob Paulson

Reading of Compliance with Open Public Meetings Act

This meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which appears on the Borough website. Meetings are usually held the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm in Boro Hall in the room on the first floor west wing.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the January 4 meeting were approved.

Boro Report

Katherine said that Boro Council is favorable to spreading the hazardous tree work over several years. Also, parks and the bike path have budgets separate from MSTC, so work in those areas should be broken out from other MSTC work. Also, Council says MSTC has to meet in Boro Hall. The first Council budget meeting is March 18.

New Business

MSTC Tree Summary 2015

The combined Tree-Lists and Hazardous Tree Survey are in the document Tree-Lists. The estimates of the cost of doing all the work indicated in Tree-Lists were modified by increasing the estimate for tree removal to \$650 each, since Hyperion probably has been underbidding. Costs should include the cost of planting replacement trees for all trees removed. Boro Council had mentioned spreading the cost over 3 years. That should be in addition to our usual budget, as new dead trees and branches occur every year.

Kris Donohue and Jon Paul Beauchamp are joining MSTC

Mayor Brennan appointed Jon Paul, and will appoint Kris. Katherine will swear them in. Welcome!

Another meeting date and site

The Station Coffee House is not considered "public." Meetings will be held on the third Monday of the month in Boro Hall in the room on the first floor west wing.

Contracted tree work

Hyperion removed 10 trees (9 line items) for \$3000. An additional tree at 210 E Maple was removed for an extra \$450. See the Completed Work sheet in the Tree_Lists file. Three of the trees were in the bikepath, and three were in Wellwood Park. These were included in 10 trees removed for \$3000 (individual trees were not priced). Breaking the \$3000 evenly for 10 trees is \$300 each, so the 3 bike path and 3 Wellwood Park tree are each \$900. So \$900 could come out of the bike path budget and \$900 out of the Wellwood budget.

CC Tree Experts has been given a contract for up to \$5700 for tree trimming from the AA and A trees in the MSTC Trim sheet. They expect to be finished soon.

2016 NJDEP Tree Recovery Campaign

John ordered 1000 seedlings, with perhaps 500 going to Dina for distribution to school kids.

Kerry will work on publicity, distribution, and pick up. Distribution may be Friday April 29.

Ordering trees to plant

We should order trees to plant this spring. Also, the Pages would like to order a replacement Gingko, which they will pay for.

Arbor Day 2016

Official Arbor Day is Friday April 29. No doubt MPWC will plant a tree in Merchantville on that day, and will want us to suggest a tree and a site. In recent years MSTC has done something on

the next day, which this year is Saturday April 30, which may be Merchantville clean-up day. MSTC ideally would have a ceremony involving planting a tree, involving school children, and taking photos.

NJ Shadetree Federation and Arbor Day USA dues

There will be bills to pay.

218 Springfield Ave

The resident, Sam Slattery, had asked permission to remove one of the two CCI street trees in front of his property. It has been over 6 years since they were planted.

Hollis spoke with him. He had cut down the tree without permission, leaving an 8" stump. He claims it raised the sidewalk (less than 1/4") and is near his water and gas lines. It was not near his sewer line.

For cutting down a street tree without permission, he can be fined up to \$250 plus the value of the tree (i.e. the CTE value of the remaining tree). This issue was tabled until this month.

Tree Maintenance Open Issues:

- 2 Crump Lane on Franklin – tree was on PSE&G Removal list, but Bob thought it had been removed. As the resident pointed out, the tree has not been removed, so it is again on the PSE&G Removal list.
- 114 E Park Ave – resident wants permission to repair the sidewalk “respecting the integrity of the tree”
- 24 E Walnut Ave, resident request, wires, on the PSE&G Removal list – PSE&G wants better instructions or marking as to which tree it is – John will do that

Watering planted trees

This spring we should revisit getting DPW to use the MSTC water tank to water trees. John will come up with instructions including a list of trees to water, and give them to Steve Volkert, who is the Boro Council supervisor of Public Works.

CSIP sidewalk grant

There are 120 sidewalk citations. Some properties have multiple citations. All were issued at the same time to give residents equal opportunity to apply for a sidewalk grant, as it is unlikely the grant will cover all the work. Under the grant, the State provides \$20,000 and the Boro provides \$5000. Residents hire their own contractor and are reimbursed up to 60% of their cost. Because sidewalks are required to be 4' wide and not curve onto lawns, otherwise healthy trees must be removed. The grant is being administered by Bill Watson, Code Enforcement, under the supervision of Dan Sperrazza, Boro Council. Nothing new.

Recruiting new members

With Kris and Jon Paul joining, there are still two openings.

Kris was to speak with her neighbor Mark about joining.

Tree City USA annual application

They required a designated Chairperson, and Bob gave them John Long as acting Chairperson.

DPW Tree Work

They trimmed 5 trees from their list. See the Completed Work sheet.

Stump Grinding

Roy is now adding stumps as trees are removed and removing stumps as they are ground. There are currently 20 stumps remaining on the list, plus various totem poles.

Roy was not removing totem poles until there was more money for stump removal because he thinks totem poles are less of a tripping hazard than stumps.

Roy would like us to update the stump list, in order to get more funds for stump grinding this year. Nothing new.

PSE&G tree work for us

They want better definition as to which tree to remove at 24 E Walnut. John will do that.

Old Business

Tree Maintenance Decisions, Work Done

- 8 W Walnut – resident claims it dropped a major branch, damaging at least one car – this tree is on the MSTC Removal list but not in Hyperion work list – PSE&G would not remove it as no primary wire is involved

Hazardous branch on private tree

Katherine posed the question regarding a resident (on E. Chestnut) who have a non-borough tree with a hazardous limb hanging over the sidewalk and street. Is there an ordinance that covers this situation? Does it involve the Shade Tree Commission in any way? What are the height limitations for tree branches over the street? MSTC can ask the Code Enforcement officer Bill Watson whether the branches are a hazard based on height. He could then cite the owner to have them removed. . Katherine Swann will ask Bill Watson about this.

MSTC Boro email and voicemail

The MSTC email is accessed at <http://webmail.merchantvillenj.gov/>. The user name is shadetree@merchantvillenj.gov, and the password is blackoak. Bob is currently answering it. The MSTC voicemail is extension 373 at the Boro main mail phone number (856) 662-2474. We voted to have Denise Brouse remove this extension, as no one was answering it.

Tree Inventory

Hollis's new inventory will be accessible from smart phones (iPhone, Android) and tablets (iPad etc). You will be able to view the current inventory and make updates. John received iTree training at the NJ STF meeting. Hollis will get the app working as soon as he can. Nothing new.

Home Depot trees

They are typically marked down by as much as 50% in mid-October. We should try to buy some in 2016. Nothing new.

Memorial Tree Report

The Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund had \$1338.38 as of 11/2/15. This fund contains Shade Tree donations, and can only be used to purchase trees and memorial plaques.

Nancy and Bob Page would like to purchase a tree to replace the dying/dead Ginkgo planted by the bus stop on E Maple by St. Peters by their Jonathan Page memorial plaque. They would like us to get it for them.

MSTC Budget

Budget Committed includes money spent and money we owe as of now. Budget Approved is the budget allocated by the Boro. Only the totals are important. The 2015 approved budget was \$12,000.

For 2015, the MSTC budget was overrun by \$1890. The Memorial Trust fund is separate.

Since it is not possible for a budget deficit to carry over, \$1500 were taken out of Buildings and Grounds and \$390 out of the Clerk's fund. Denise Brouse does not want this to happen again.

The 2016 budget will not be finalized until the spring. In the meantime, we are allowed to spend as necessary. Officially, there is a cap until the budget is finalized, perhaps ¼ of the 2015 budget, i.e. \$3,000.

MSTC Fund*	2015 Budget			2016 Budget		
	Committed	Approved	Remaining	Committed	Approved	Remaining
Tree and Stump Removal, Tree Trimming	\$9500 ^d	\$10,000	\$500	\$6150 ^a		
Purchasing and Planting New Trees	\$3870 ^e	\$1000	-\$2870			
Training and Miscellaneous	\$520 ^f	\$1000	\$480			
Total	\$13,890	\$12,000	-\$1890	\$6150		

*not including Shade Tree Memorial Trust fund
e2015 Fernbrook Nursery order of 12 trees \$2200
f2015 NJ Shade Tree Federation dues \$95
f2015 Arbor Day Foundation dues \$35
d2015 Hyperion removals (113 Woodbine: \$800; Wellwood trunk \$550) \$1350
e2015 Elite Landscaping to plant 12 trees \$1670
d2015 Weldon hanging branch removal \$150
d2015 Garden State stump grinding \$2000
d2015 Hyperion removals (9 trees) \$3000 _open, not yet paid
d2015 CC Tree Expert trimming \$3000 paid
f 2015 NJ STF meeting attendance – 2 people for 2 days \$390 paid
a2016 Hyperion removal (1 additional) - \$450
a 2016 CC Tree Experts trimming - \$5700

Next Meeting after March 21: April 18, 2016 (third Monday) 7 pm in Boro Hall.

Respectfully submitted by: Bob Paulson, secretary